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Michelle Steel Says California Gas Use Down 8.3%, Diesel Plummets 14.4%

Michelle Steel, Third District Member of the State Board of Equalization (BOE), today released figures on gasoline consumption in California showing a decline of 8.3 percent in August 2008 from August 2007.

Californians consumed 1.260 billion gallons of gasoline in August 2008, which is 113.8 million gallons below that of August 2007.

The average California gas price at the pump in August 2008 was \$4.13 per gallon, a 40.0 percent increase from the average price in August last year when it was \$2.95. The BOE estimates that nearly twice as much sales tax is generated annually by higher gasoline prices than five years ago. Those higher prices generated approximately \$3.6 billion in sales tax during 2007 when the average price was \$3.12. In contrast, 2003's gasoline sales generated \$2.1 billion in sales tax when the average pump price was \$1.88.

Diesel fuel sold for use on California roads totaled 234 million gallons in August 2008, a 14.4 percent decline, which is 39.37 million gallons below that of August 2007. The decreased consumption reflects both the impacts of higher diesel prices of \$4.54 in August 2008 and the slowing economy that is associated with less freight movement on California roads and highways. California diesel prices were up 48.9 percent in August 2008 compared to August of 2007 when the average diesel price was \$3.05.

The BOE is able to monitor gallons through tax receipts paid by fuel distributors. Figures for September 2008 are scheduled to be available near the end of December. All monthly, quarterly, and annual figures can be viewed on the BOE website at: www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/spftrpts.htm.

Taxable Gasoline Gallons: www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/MVF_10_Year_Report.pdf

Taxable Diesel Gallons: www.boe.ca.gov/sptaxprog/reports/Diesel_10_Year_Report.pdf

Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006, Michelle Steel serves as the country's highest ranking Korean-American elected official. She represents the more than 8.5 million taxpayers of the Third Board of Equalization District, including the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Riverside, Imperial and San Bernardino.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization (BOE) is a publicly elected tax board. The BOE collects more than \$53 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes.

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